



Ivy Leaves



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Ivy Leaves



Wayne Hutchinson

Pictures

One warm airy Sunday in March
 She took a walk and
Started to notice and observe instead of
 Everyday looking and week-day watching.
Deep green lime replaces old worn brown
 That tickles pink, winter-tender feet.
Honey suckle trumpets of white and gold
 Appear, growing wild, entwining the swing set.
Her inside laughter makes itself known in a smile
 As a childhood discovery
Of obtaining the sweet droplet is employed.

Betsy Ball

Even a seed,
finding no warmth
in the dark of winter,
refuses to take root,
and lies dormant ---
until spring.

Pam Moore

To The Honeysuckle

I see your tender blossoms,
Bursting forth in mystic flight.
Tall stamen threads shoot up toward the sky
And stand like imperial guardsmen
Over the angel-wing petals.
Your consuming vines dress the countryside
In enchanted green and snowy white,
While green-brown stems carry dew-polished leaves
On a wild ride through the thickets.
Where does it end, this dazzling maze?
The countryside is covered and the
Air is filled with a sweet perfume
That intoxicates like wine poured
From Baachus' cup.
Hidden in your tender heart
A crystal drop of honey waits for some
Lone passerby to bring it forth
To meet the waiting world,
And with the touch of this sweet drop
Upon the lips of a searching soul,
Your whole story of beautiful simplicity
Is unveiled.

Dennis Matthews



Ruddy Goulet



Sharon Gilbert

I love
The sand, the sun, the waves of the sea,
the smell of fresh coffee
or hot tea;
Watching butterflies fluttering by,
and eagles soaring
high in the sky;
The smell of honeysuckle on a cool summer night,
that peaceful feeling
after a fright;
The laugh of a child, the face of a clown,
a friend just to talk to
when I'm feeling down;
A pillow fight, a walk in the park,
just listening to silence
while sitting in the dark;
A ride in the country, a clear glassy lake,
homegrown strawberries
on ma's pound cake;
Grandfather clocks, a rainbow, the trees,
pickles, and roses,
the hum of the bees;
Walking in puddles, to whittle with a knife,
the world that God gave us,
the little things in life.

Lea Mullinax



Cynthia Snipes

Twin Girls

Twin girls walked down a brown dirt road.
One held a flower, one held a toad.
Thoughts of delight took hold of one,
The other kicked a rock, made it run.
A friendly sir came by on a horse,
Inquiring of them direction, of course.
One said here, one said there.
To ask indeed he did not dare,
Rode he off with a pop,
Now convinced not to stop . . . evermore

So did they walk their destiny on,
Having in one confusedness sown.
Creatures of night did scamper about,
Sensing the light of the day gone out.
A woman approached by the winged winds,
Inquiring of them whether be they twins.
One said yes, one said no,
And she understood how said they so
Flew she off with a smile,
Wiser grown in a while . . . all the more.

Lisa Dempsey

When the Time Came

Driving home from school in a hurry was no big deal until the rainy day when the curve came too fast and my reactions too slow. When I opened my eyes, my body was sprawled across the front seat. Surprisingly, there was a complete absence of pain. My field of vision was only a mosaic of shattered glass. There was an intense desire to wipe the trickle of blood from my face, but the brain waves were faltering before the message reached my arms. Then suddenly I became surrounded by a blanket of silent blackness.

When I regained consciousness, I found myself standing before an illuminated white figure that so reminded me of the meditative Lincoln seated in his memorial that I could only gape in awe. Quickly, though, I was filled with the profound realization that I stood facing eternity.

I was suddenly filled with the sheepish apprehension of the Sunday morning Christian who creeps into the church assured that his Saturday night sins are known by all present. The Figure, however, just silently gazed on me with a look of tranquil, placid composure.

Then flashing through my mind was the idea of kneeling and asking forgiveness, but I just didn't want to die. I stood firm and found myself pleading, not for eternal life in heaven, but for continued life on earth. When I had finished glorifying my past accomplishments, I offered excuses for all the sins which easily came to mind and felt truly worthy of a few added years of physical existence.

As I looked up, the Great face only stared back with an expression of deep sorrow and pity. Even the exiled Adam could hardly have felt smaller than I did at this moment. I suppose it was simply a scorned conscience which caused the feeling of intense heat as I was once again plunged into darkness.

I awoke next, surrounded by spotless walls. Whether owing it to medical knowledge or in consolation for my arrogant persuasion, I was alive. The man in the white lab coat listening to my heartbeat was proof enough of that.

He smiled with placid composure, "You were lucky, son. You almost met your Maker in that wreck."

Perhaps he wondered at the bandaged face staring back with an expression of deep sorrow and pity as the feeling of intense heat seemed to return to my body.

Findley Smith

Midnight

The forest is dark,
except for glimpses of gray overhead,
through the pines.
A silver moon teases me
as it slips behind a cloud.
But I am not alone.
And night will pass.
Then the dawn . . .

Pam Moore

Like a Phoenix

Justice,
Like a phoenix,
Time and again,
Hidden;
Time and again,
Buried;
Time and again;
Destroyed;
Time and again,
Reborn.

Bill Parker



Observation

Moon begins rising across blue horizons,
The man in the moon looks down upon me.
His expression-filled eyes take me by surprise,
And it seems from his mouth that he's yawning
or crying.

I cannot tell which and I don't really care
If he's

sleepy

or sad,

But -

He's really not there!

An arrangement of craters makes up that face
That is

Suspended in air

At a day's weary end

Of meeting the needs

Of the great human race.

Moon begins rising across blue horizons and
The man in the moon looks down upon me.

Betsy Ball

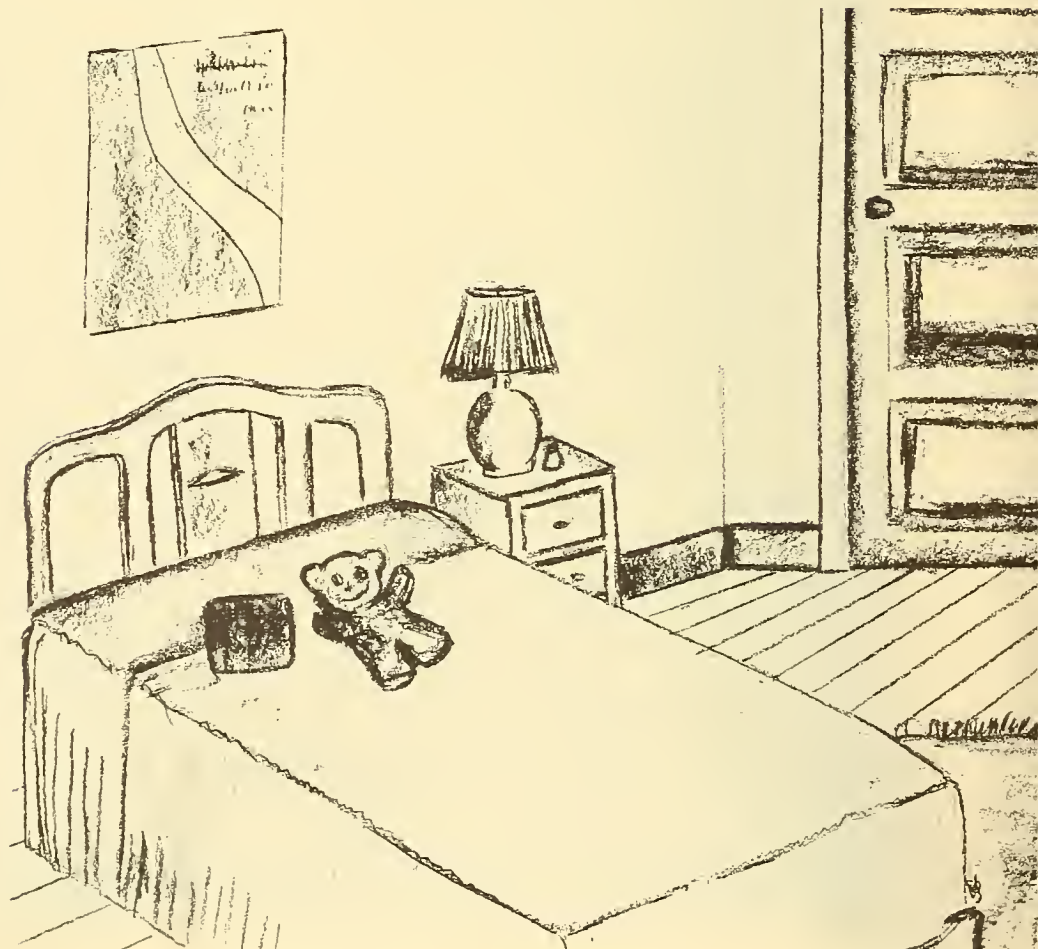
Amidst my childhood room of flowers and dolls
Of Levi's hanging next to formals,
Of Winnie the Pooh and other adolescent dreams,
You will find small hints of someone growing up.

Tear-stained pillows,
Nicks on walls where brushes have been thrown
Out of desperation and confusion;
Dreamy music takes the place of heavy rock.

Perhaps it will be noticed in the atmosphere ---
An aura of strained tenseness,
A bomb ready to explode at precisely the time you tell me,
"Please clean up your room."

Perhaps it will not be noticed at all,
Until I can stand on the peak and say,
"Thank God it's all over."

Linda Wilson



Teddy Bear Love

Our eyes met, you said Hello,
Our hearts met, then we had seeds to sow.
I could never forget the love we shared.
Times and places are there to show how much I cared.
With words and actions I tried to prove my love for you.
Now you're like my teddy bears ---
Cuddled and loved, but now on a shelf.

Julie Brashier

Myself and Yourself

I'm here, keeping company with myself,
Thinking of you and yourself and
Wondering if the night comes lonely to you.
Are you secure and warm as winter slides
through your town and covers my
sunshine season of warmth . . . of rain
. . . of you?

Don't let the cold harden your smile ---
Preserve it . . . myself and I depend on
it to carry us through future summers to
come . . . and to go.

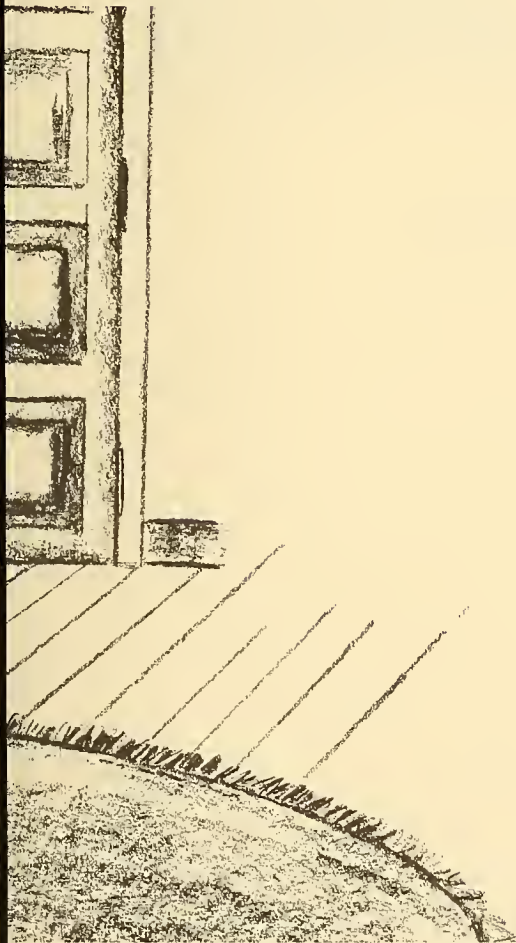
It didn't rain today, but water-
colored thoughts of you ran constantly through
my mind.

To say I need you would probably frighten you,
So I'll submit this for tomorrow . . .

It's cold and lonely here tonight
and as I remember I find . . .

myself missing yourself
and
me missing you . . .

Karen Reynolds



Sharon Gilbert



Wayne Hutchinson

The Children Have Gone

The sun is dropping behind the trees
And all the children have gone.
A merry-go-round still turns
In slow, dying motion.
The metal slide catches a final
Ray of the sun and scatters the
Reflection like shattered glass.
All the children have gone and
Taken with them the sweet sound
Of silly rhymes and bubbling laughter.
The abandoned park lies helpless
Under the captivating silence of darkness.
All the children have gone and
The park is dead.

Dennis Matthews



The Butterfly

Fluttering wings painted silver and gold,
A soft shimmer of color on every fold,
They mount on the wind, soaring high,
Their delicate tracery against the sky.
Gliding near a rose with magical grace,
The tips of her wings are woven as lace.
The butterfly possesses the invisible air,
And floats on the breeze as the world's only heir.

Connie Mattison

sharon
gilbert

How Do You Stop This Thing?

I kept asking myself over and over again, "What on earth am I doing going sledding in the middle of the night?" There we were, my girlfriend, her brother, and his wife, going to Sassafras Mountain. I was already miserable because I had on several layers of clothing to keep warm. But my agony was nothing compared to how I would feel before the night was over.

My girlfriend and I were in the first car to reach the mountain. It was already dark, but under the bright moonlight I could make out the very long, steep, curved, tar and gravel mountain road which was covered completely by six inches of ice. Our driver Hot Rod yelled, "Hang On," and before I knew it he had floored the accelerator and was using his race car driving skill to get up the mountain. The old Ford strained, but the ice was too slick. Finally, after sliding back three times, we gave up and piled out of the car and into the truck hoping the truck could make it to the top.

The truck driver, Creek, and I decided to make sure we could make it all the way to the top. We started up the road, got almost to the top, and found we could make it up. We turned around to tell the others the road was passable, but we got to the third hill from the bottom and Creek tried a "Bootleg"* to turn the truck around again. But Creek's bootleg failed. Instead of turning like we were supposed to, the front end of the truck slid off the road and over the side of the mountain. I thought we were gone. I was scared. But the truck stopped as if frozen in animation. I began laughing even though I knew it would have been all over if the truck had kept going.

Twenty minutes later we finally got the truck back on the road. We parked it and rode up in the back of the four-wheel drive pickup, still shaking from our near brush with disaster.

We arrived at the top and everyone climbed out of the truck ready to ride the sleds back down the long, steep mountain road. Riding the sleds was the main reason we were there. I had planned on putting off my turn, though, as long as possible, because I had never ridden a sled down a small hill in the daylight, much less down a mountain road at night. But then I heard it. My girlfriend's brother, Jackie, started calling my name and telling me it was my turn; he wanted to see me ride a sled. I knew there would be no easy way out because Jackie is a very persistent person. So I said, "What the heck, I might as well get it over with."

Everyone going down this time jumped on a sled and took off with me pulling up the rear. I figured if I fell off no one would be able to see me. Right behind me was a jeep following the sledgers, giving us light and then helping us get back to the top. As I started off I yelled to Jackie, "How do you stop this thing?"

And he replied, "You don't."

I knew right then it was too late. I started picking up speed and estimated myself at about thirty-five to forty miles an hour. I had good control of the sled but couldn't see very well. I was ready to get off, but how? I started digging the toes of my boots hard into the ice trying to slow down. This didn't do much good. Suddenly I lost control of the sled. It was headed for the inner embankment and I could not do anything about it. I dug my boots that much harder into the ice, but still found no relief for the speed. Before I knew it I was right beside the embankment picking up speed instead of reducing it. Then, before I had time to realize what was happening, the sled caught on something and came to an abrupt stop, but I didn't. I flew off the sled and hit the solid ice embankment head first, my face digging down into the ice. I felt the skin on my face being torn into a million pieces and my nose felt like it was being flattened against my face. I felt a sharp pain in my right leg at my knees; I thought my leg was broken.

*A "Bootleg" is done by simply locking the brakes and turning the steering wheel hard to the left or right, depending on which direction you want to slide. This causes the back end of the vehicle to slide around in a hundred and eighty degree turn, which leaves the direction you came from.

I had begun rolling on top of my head when I came to a stop. I lay there on the cold ice scared to move, afraid that I couldn't. I finally got the courage and got up on my hands and knees and then stood straight up. I knew my face had been cut up because I had the distinct taste of blood which was quickly being dried by the crisp, cold mountain wind.

It was dark and I was alone. Everyone else was either at the top of the mountain above me, or sledding further down the road below me. I cursed because of the pain and the blood. I cursed because I had been afraid of being called chicken and had done what was against my better judgment so that I could show everyone that I was as tough as they. Then I laughed. I laughed because of what had happened. I laughed at myself because I had been so stupid. I laughed because now I could show them that I was as tough as they, I could keep up with them. And I laughed because the pain was so great I wanted to cry.

I picked up the sled and began dragging it to the top of the mountain. I had taken about ten steps when I stopped and said, "What the heck, I'll just wait for them."

But I knew deep down inside that I stopped because I hurt too bad to continue. I dropped the sled and sat down on top of it waiting for the jeep to pick me up and carry me back to the top where I knew I would be taken care of. It was cold and lonely and quiet. The brisk wind blowing across my blood blotted face made me colder and made me hurt that much more. It was so quiet that all I could hear was the trees moving quietly in the wind as if waiting for the moment when my life would cease and all hope would be gone. But I knew better. I knew better. I knew how lucky I had been. I sat in the quiet not hearing a thing except for my heavy broken breathing and the trees blowing in the wind. It seemed like hours had passed since I had crashed, but the jeep still had not returned. I sat in the quiet thinking. Thinking that the last thing my mother had said to me, which she had called me back to the door to tell me, was "Please, Please, be careful."

How would I ever tell her how stupid I had been? What would she say when she saw me?

My thoughts were quickly forgotten when I saw the headlights of the jeep begin to round the curve below me. I knew that help was on its way. I climbed painfully to my feet and was upright by the time the jeep got to me. Everyone jumped off quickly coming to my aid. All I could do was smile and bloody smile and say, "I stopped the damn thing!"

Terry Corder

Cold

I was
Cold,
Determined
To stay
Locked up
In a shell,
Determined
To Love
No One,
Determined
Not to
Be Loved,
But
The Warmth
of
Your eyes
And
Your smile
Melted
My ice.

I am
Warm,
Resolved
To be
Gentle
and Kind,
Resolved
To Love
Everyone,
And
Resolved
To Thaw
Someone else's
Frozen World,
As you
Have Thawed
Mine.

E. Lynne Watson

My Mirror

A tinted mirror
Reflecting a tinted world.
My eyes will not die.

Pain shaded through
Reflecting images
Mixed with love.

Seeing nothing, save
Reflections.

Yet, never seeing,

You --- my mirror.

Dennis Matthews

He passed so silently
that I would hardly
have known he was
there

--- except for his shadow.

Pam Moore



Kathleen Matthews

Alive and Just Trying to Be

Here began.
And Here we came,
Children in our mother's arms.
We grew up together,
Side by side in trying times.
We had our differences
And at times we almost split,
But something held us together,
And made us stronger.
Somehow, we made it through
That Difficult Age.
We have grown up in a period of crisis
But it also gave us the strength
To be People.
It gave us the will to survive
In a hostile world.
It gave us the courage to change
When Standards dictate Conformity.
We have grown up in a world
Where People are not as important
As Machines and Money.
We are the children of society
Where childhood does not exist.

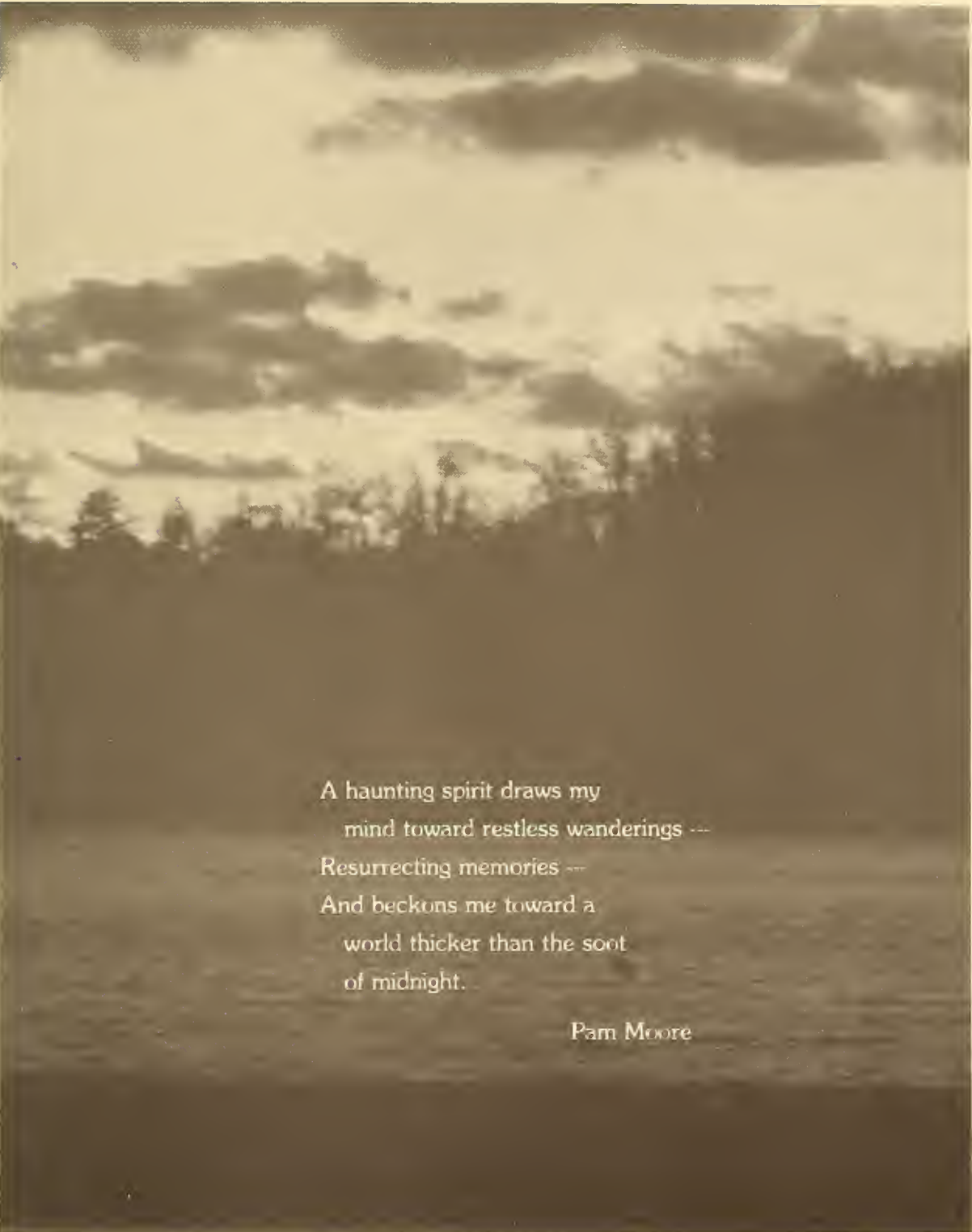
Linda Wilson

Remember when, so long ago,
Amidst a summer's day,
A boy brought you a treasured gift,
A dandelion bouquet.

A dirty face, but happy smile,
His gift, he was so proud.
To him these weeds were roses red.
"Here Mom", he said aloud.

The summers come, the summers pass,
The boy has gone his way.
But his love is still as strong
As that dandelion bouquet.

Patti Moore

A sepia-toned photograph of a landscape. In the foreground, there is a body of water with gentle ripples. A dark, silhouetted line of trees separates the water from the sky. The sky is filled with large, dramatic clouds, some of which are illuminated from below, suggesting a low sun or moon. The overall mood is contemplative and somewhat somber.

A haunting spirit draws my
mind toward restless wanderings ---
Resurrecting memories ---
And beckons me toward a
world thicker than the soot
of midnight.

Pam Moore

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